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Citizen Crime Reporting Projects

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NATIONAL EVALUATION PROGRAM PHASE I SUMMARY REPORT

Citizen Crime Reporting Projects

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**National Institute of Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice
Law Enforcement Assistance Administration
United States Department of Justice**

**NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF LAW ENFORCEMENT
AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE**

Gerald M. Caplan, *Director*

**LAW ENFORCEMENT ASSISTANCE
ADMINISTRATION**

ABSTRACT

This report summarizes the current state of knowledge about projects that encourage citizens to report suspicious/criminal activities to law enforcement agencies. It represents the results of an eight month research study conducted for the National Institute of Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice (NILECJ) as part of its National Evaluation Program (NEP). Contained in this summary report of Citizen Crime Reporting Projects (CCRPs) are: (a) a description of project types; (b) a framework presenting the place CCRPs occupy in the criminal justice system; (c) an assessment of the current state of knowledge regarding the effort and impact of CCRPs; and (d) judgmental recommendations for future CCRP efforts.

From a theoretical perspective CCRPs have an important role in the criminal justice system since most activities in this system can be traced back to citizen reports. It is also clear that many communities are investing much effort in CCRP activities. Of greater importance is the fact that citizens are responding to these efforts by attending meetings, using special telephone numbers to report crimes and opening their homes to their neighbors. Since CCRPs are community oriented, they potentially can impact on such problems as poor police-community relations, lack of community cohesiveness and reduce unrealistic fear of crime. CCRPs offer one of the few opportunities to do something positive about crime. Unfortunately, the lack of well designed CCRP evaluation studies does not allow us to draw any firm conclusions regarding the effectiveness of CCRPs.

Given the general lack of good quantifiable data the judgment of project operators and experts in the area of crime prevention take special importance. The majority feel that their activities are increasing the number of crimes reported. Experts were almost unanimously positive in their evaluation of CCRPs.

Based both on a theoretical perspective and the judgment of project operators and experts we recommend that CCRPs continue to receive LEAA support. In particular we are especially optimistic about the potential of Home Presentation and Radio Watch Projects. This support, however, should be contingent upon adequate planning and evaluation. Some important points to consider are presented below and explained in greater detail in Volume III: Model Evaluation Manual for CCRPs.

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FOREWORD

This study of citizen crime reporting projects (CCRPs) is one of four assessments of community crime prevention activities published by the National Institute. The other studies looked at citizen patrols, premise security projects, and property-marking projects (Operation Identification). Taken together, they provide an overview of some of the more organized community responses to crime.

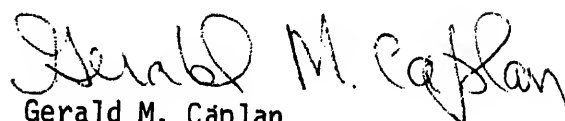
Community efforts to encourage citizen crime reporting are growing and work to increase the number of crimes reported to the police, according to crime prevention experts surveyed in this study.

This is good news. It indicates that citizens make a difference in preventing and controlling crime, a point that has been highlighted in recent research findings. An Institute-sponsored study of police response time found that citizens often delay in reporting crimes, so that police may not be called to the scene until long after a suspect has fled. In many cases victims are too traumatized to act quickly, making it all the more essential that witnesses take the initiative in reporting crimes to the police. And other studies have shown that information provided by victims and witnesses is the key to solving most crimes.

Beyond their value in promoting citizen involvement, citizen crime reporting projects can have a salubrious effect on the community. The researchers report that they help to foster a more cohesive attitude among neighbors, improve relations with police, and reduce unwarranted fear of crime.

As this study points out, our knowledge of the relationship between the physical environment and human behavior has advanced in recent years. There is persuasive evidence that the way neighborhoods and buildings are designed can encourage residents to adopt a more proprietary attitude toward their surroundings.

One of the keys to the "defensible space" concepts developed with Institute support is the need to provide opportunities for natural citizen surveillance. Citizen crime reporting projects are a logical complement to this approach. Even where no physical changes are possible, CCRPs can encourage citizens to take a more active role and open what Jane Jacobs called "the eyes on the street."



Gerald M. Caplan
Director
National Institute of Law
Enforcement and Criminal
Justice

Preface

This document summarizes findings of a national research study of projects that encourage citizens to report suspicious/criminal activities to law enforcement authorities. The study was conducted between May 1975 and January 1976, for the National Institute of Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice (NILECJ) under the direction of Dr. Leonard Bickman, Loyola University of Chicago. A more detailed account of this study's findings is documented in the following five Volumes on file at NILECJ.

1. Volume I -- Final Report: Using the data collected from questionnaires, site visit field research, and expert opinions of advisory committee, six key issues regarding the performance of CCRPs are discussed. In addition, other issues related to CCRPs, such as crime reduction and impact of funding, are discussed in depth.
2. Volume II -- Methodology and Project Flow Charts: A detailed description of the methodological techniques used in this research, accompanied by flow charts and accompanying narratives of the operations of 14 site-visited projects.
3. Volume III -- Manual for single project evaluation: Strategy for evaluation of a CCRP, suitable for use by local CCRP administrators.
4. Volume IV -- Design for Phase II: The design for a Phase II evaluation as an attempt to fill the gaps in knowledge found in the Phase I research. In particular, in depth evaluations of two Home Presentation projects and the creation and evaluation of a Radio Watch project is suggested.
5. Volume V -- "Towards Increasing Citizen Responsibility: Surveillance and the Reporting of Crimes." A comprehensive review of the issues involved in the planning and execution of citizen crime reporting projects (CCRP). Includes a presentation of the historical context and development of the CCRP concept, reasons for victim and witness reporting and nonreporting of crime as documented by social science research, influence of community cohesion and fear of crime reporting, potential positive and negative effects of CCRPs and evaluation of CCRPs.

The authors would like to acknowledge the assistance of Ms. Lois Mock, Dr. Carolyn Burstein, Dr. Fred Heinzelmann, Mr. Michael Mulkey and Dr. Richard Barnes of the NILECJ. We would also like to express our appreciation to the following eight members of our Advisory Committee who provided conscientious input concerning the initial findings of this study: Mr. Ray Bray of the California Commission on P.O.S.T.; Officer Richard Blackwell of the Palo Alto Police

Department; Mr. Gerald Gersey of the Illinois Law Enforcement Commission; Dr. Charles Girard of Koepsell, Girard and Associates; Mr. Edward Good, Director of the Seattle Community Crime Prevention Program; Mr. Gary Hill, President of Contact, Inc.; Mr. Tom Johnson of the Michigan Office of Criminal Justice Programs; and Mr. John Phelan of the Florida Governors' Crime Prevention Committee. We would also like to thank the following persons for their consultation and advice: Drs. Fred DuBow, Thomas Cook, and John McSweeny of Northwestern University, Dr. Michael Maltz of the University of Illinois, Chicago Circle, and Dr. Anne Schneider of the Oregon Research Institute. Lastly we would like to thank the project directors and staff of CCRPs throughout the country who gave their time to us on site visits and also in completing our lengthy questionnaire.

I. Introduction

On his way home from work a man sees an unfamiliar car cruising up and down his block. Before entering his house, he notices that the driver is sitting parked in front of a neighbor's house. He thinks it is strange behavior but does not think the police would want to be bothered. The next day he learns that his neighbor's house was burglarized.

A radio-dispatched taxi driver working the midnight shift drops off a customer in a desolate, poorly lighted section of town. As he drives away, he notices a woman struggling with a man on the sidewalk. The cabbie slows down, and it becomes obvious from the woman's screams that the man is overpowering her. He calls over his radio to his dispatcher, "Woman in trouble. Corner of Maple and Hudson. Call the police." "Are you involved?" the dispatcher asks. "No." "Sorry, can't help you out," replies the dispatcher.

A housewife finds out by accident that a specific person is selling drugs to adolescents in her neighborhood. Infuriated, she considers calling the police but thinks, "They probably won't do anything about it unless I give them my name. What if the pusher found out who I was?" Instead, she does nothing.

While these situations are not as dramatic as the Kitty Genovese incident⁵² a decade ago in which 38 citizens witnessed the brutal murder of a young woman but did not call the police, they represent typical situations in which a citizen could have called the police. If the citizen-witnesses in these instances had notified the police, these crimes may have been prevented or halted in progress. Perhaps the offenders may even have been apprehended.

As illustrated by these examples of nonreporting by witnesses, many fears and obstacles stand in the way of witness reporting. Sometimes lack of familiarity and isolation among neighbors prevent recognition of suspicious persons and circumstances. Sometimes fear of involvement and retaliation prevent persons with knowledge about crimes from contacting the police. Sometimes nonreporting is the result of not noticing suspicious events and thus missing an opportunity to report a crime. In other instances, nonreporting results from physical inconvenience or lack of a direct means of communicating with the police, as in the case of the taxi driver. Of course, these are only a few of the reasons why witnesses may fail to report suspicious/criminal activity to the police.

There has been a small number of basic research studies conducted by social scientists which have tried to discover factors which influence citizen reaction to witnessing a crime. Most of this research has examined witness reaction to staged petty crimes. The findings of this research indicate that many factors assumed to affect reporting did not have an impact. For example, the witness's attitude towards the police^{8, 31, 32} or towards the criminal^{10, 29} had little relationship to reporting. Similarly, the importance of anonymity^{3, 9}, the personal characteristics of the bystander^{5, 11, 25, 29} and effectiveness of mass media^{7, 10} in influencing reporting, have been called into question by research findings. Such factors as ambiguity of the situation^{19, 20}, the severity of the crime¹², the

commitment of the witness to report³⁹, the behavior of other witnesses^{1, 2, 3, 5, 26} and the characteristics of the community³⁰ have been shown to affect witness reporting of a crime. Research in the area of witness or bystander reporting is relatively new. As research in this area grows it is hoped that it will prove useful to project operators who wish to structure their project on a theoretical and empirical basis.

Victimization studies in recent years have indicated that the number of crimes reported by victims may represent only the "tip of the iceberg" of actual victimization.⁶¹ To date, no research exists that indicates the extent of nonreporting among witnesses to suspicious/criminal activities. It may be that the frequency of nonreporting among witnesses is equivalent to or greater than nonreporting among victims of crimes.

In the late 1960s, police and sheriff departments, civilian-run city agencies, civic and community groups began developing projects aimed at improving witness reporting of suspicious/criminal activity to law enforcement authorities. This report summarizes the findings of an eight month national research study of these projects, which are referred to in this report as "Citizen Crime Reporting Projects" (CCRPs).

II. CCRPs and Other Crime Prevention Activities

To place the findings outlined in this report in perspective, it is important to note that CCRPs seldom exist as independent projects. Instead, they are often an interdependent component of a larger crime prevention effort. Ninety per cent of the 78 CCRPs examined in depth by this study were operating as part of larger crime prevention efforts. Most CCRPs were implemented with Operation I.D. (86%) and/or home security inspections (72%). This level of interdependence is responsible for some of the difficulty in isolating and interpreting the impact of CCRPs.

While CCRPs are often part of a larger crime prevention effort they theoretically perform a very different function than target hardening approaches such as home security inspection, which are primarily victim-oriented and represent defensive methods of dealing with crime. In contrast, CCRPs represent a witness-oriented, community-based approach to crime prevention. Thus, CCRPs comprise one of the few crime prevention activities oriented towards groups of citizens rather than merely towards individuals. As noted by the National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals⁶³ as well as others¹⁸, overly self-centered approaches to crime prevention (such as the purchase of guns, dogs, or better locks) can result in individuals turning their residences into increasingly fortified castles. This may result in increased social isolation and a "barricade mentality" which can lead to the abandonment of the streets to criminals. These approaches have been characterized as "fear borne" solutions to crime in contrast to the cooperative approaches taken by many CCRPs³⁵.

The community crime control strategy favored by CCRPs seeks not only to make a positive impact on the participants but on non-participants as well. Thus, projects which encourage the

participants' involvement in neighborhood surveillance can result in protecting strangers on the street as well as residents. The encouragement of mutual aid and mutual responsibility can be seen as a positive community-building activity.

Many CCRPs attempt to build a sense of community in neighborhoods where fear and alienation previously existed. In this respect, CCRPs can compliment the recent developments in environmental psychology. Oscar Newman's research findings⁴² demonstrate that the physical environment can have an impact on both fear and crime. Innovative environmental designs which can create a greater sense of community and reduction in mistrust are currently being studied*. These designs provide opportunities for increased surveillance and reporting of crimes by witnesses. Attempts to directly change the social environment as represented by CCRP activity may compliment these changes in the physical environment. In situations where physical changes are not possible, CCRP activity may be a reasonable alternative.

III. Objectives of the CCRP Research Study and Purposes of Summary Report

This research study of CCRPs was sponsored by the National Institute of Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice (NILECJ) as part of its National Evaluation Program (NEP). The NEP consists of a series of evaluation studies of current approaches to solving crime and criminal justice problems, including those approaches supported through Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA) block grants. The objectives of this NEP research study of CCRPs were to: (1) assess the type, quantity, and quality of information available about CCRPs; (2) devise a descriptive classification system for CCRP projects; and (3) assess the effectiveness of CCRPs, if possible. In the case of this last objective substantial evidence is not available on which to form a strong conclusion about the effectiveness of CCRPs. This will be documented later in this report.

IV. Definition of Projects Surveyed

The projects to be included in this NEP research study were defined by the following three criteria:

1. projects in existence at least since June, 1974;
2. projects having a distinct name identifying them to the public; and
3. projects which focused on improving witness reporting of crimes against persons or personal property. This includes projects which focused on only one type of crime, as well as projects which focused on all crimes in this category.

In order to limit the universe of projects to be considered not all projects that could lead to increased crime reporting were

*NILECJ Program Plan, Fiscal Year 1976,

included in this study. Projects directed toward crimes against commercial establishments were not considered, nor were projects which required participants to own special costly equipment, such as citizen band radios. In addition, this study did not consider projects that encouraged informant information only about unsolved crimes known to the police (e.g., Secret Witness projects). Projects which involve citizens in regimented, scheduled activities (e.g., citizen patrols) rather than continual surveillance in the normal course of activity were also excluded. (Citizen patrols⁶⁴ are the subject of another NEP project.) As previously mentioned, CCRPs were discovered to frequently coexist with target hardening components of crime prevention efforts such as Operation I.D.³⁴ and home security inspection³⁶ projects. (These two components are also the topics of other NEPs.)

Selection of projects to be surveyed was made on the basis of the aforementioned criteria, data collected through telephone interviews, and other relevant information detailed in the following section.

V. Research Methodology

A. CCRP Survey Selection

A variety of sources was explored to locate projects nationwide that were potentially relevant to this study. Previously compiled files⁴ on crime-reporting projects in cities with a population larger than 50,000 comprised a major source. A second source was telephone interviews with criminal justice state planning agency (SPA) personnel in all 50 states and with staff members in LEAA regional offices. These telephone interviews attempted to identify potentially relevant CCRPs being funded through block and discretionary grants. The SPA personnel were asked to send copies of grant applications, progress reports and evaluations of any projects relevant to this research project. Various literature and computer searches were also used to locate potential CCRPs.

In this search, a total of 318 projects were identified as potential CCRPs and reviewed. On the basis of this review it was determined that 108 projects did not meet our definitional criteria for inclusion. The remaining 210 projects were telephoned to gather more descriptive information. On the basis of these telephone interviews 80 additional projects were judged to not meet our definitional criteria. This left 130 projects that qualified for our project survey. Of these 130 CCRPs, 100 project sites were selected to receive the CCRP project questionnaire. This final selection was based on an in-depth review of material sent by projects as well as the telephone interview. In particular, project operators who were uncooperative or who indicated that their project was being phased out were excluded from the final sample. An effort was made to include projects of various types and from as broad a geographic area as possible. Figure 1 displays the location of the 78 CCRP project sites that returned their questionnaire.

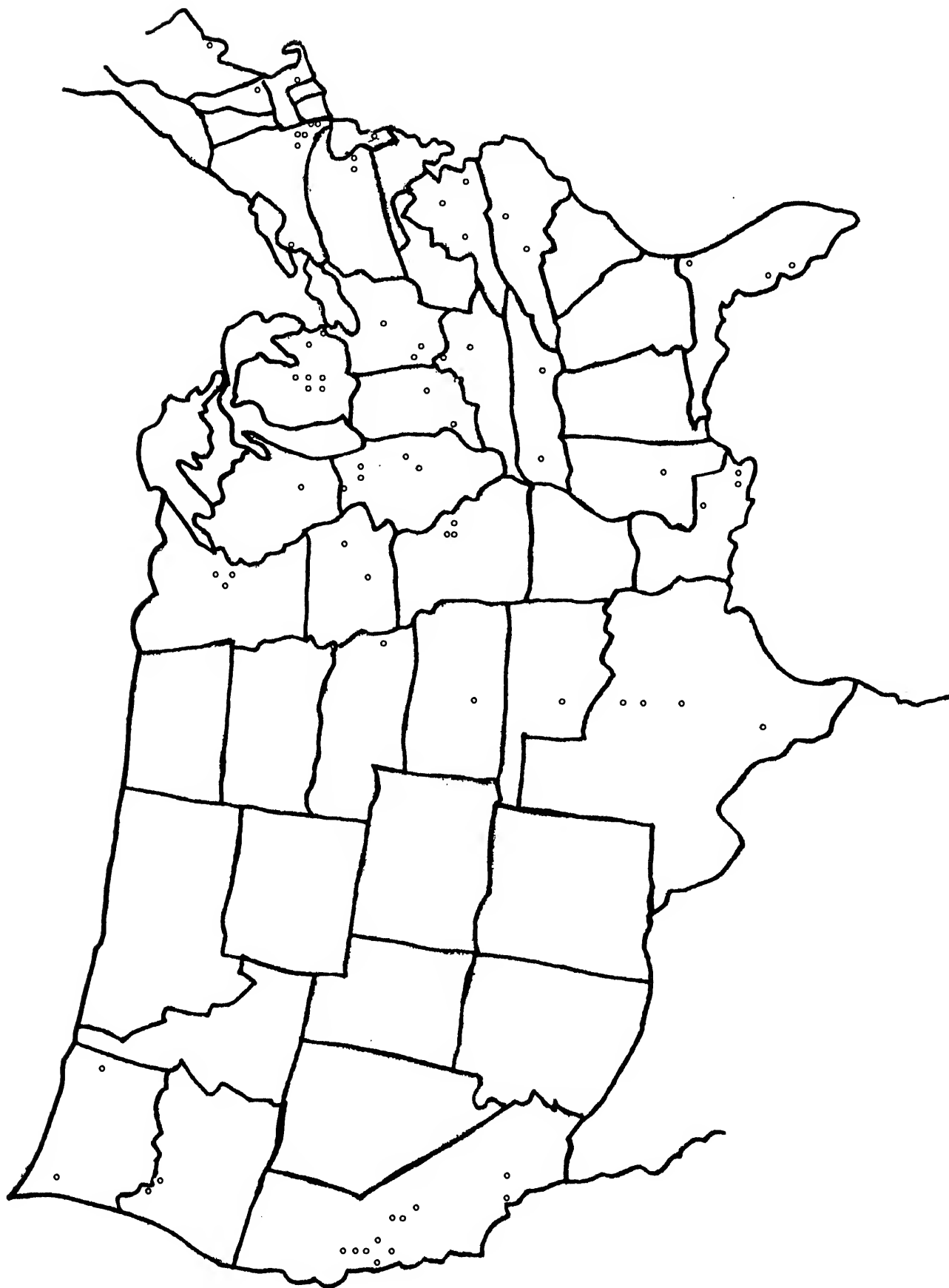


Figure 1. Location of 78 CCRPs.

B. Questionnaire Development and Distribution

The questionnaire was the fundamental instrument of data collection for this project. The guidelines for developing the structure and content of the questionnaire were derived from the work description⁶² for Phase I products supplied to each NEP project director by NILECJ. The first draft of the CCRP questionnaire was developed over a four week period and pretested. The final draft of the questionnaire was sent to the 100 project sites selected for the survey. A \$25.00 honorarium was offered for the return of a completed questionnaire*.

The twenty-three page questionnaire consisted of 62 multistage questions. Information was collected about projects in the following eight questionnaire categories: organization; budget and background; staff efforts; assistance; program goals; detailed program activities; crime statistics; citizen and community information; and evaluation. At the cut-off date, 78 of the 100 project sites had returned the questionnaire.

C. Identification and Interviewing of Experts

The names of experts about citizen involvement in crime prevention and CCRP's were acquired through telephone interviews of SPA personnel and project operators as well as from the literature on crime reporting and crime prevention. Twenty-nine experts were interviewed by telephone. As a check on our survey of projects, the experts interviewed were asked whether they knew of any CCRPs. All the projects mentioned by experts had been included in our sample. The experts were also asked questions such as why people do or do not report crimes, and can CCRPs influence crime reporting behavior,

D. Site Visit Field Research Procedures

Our staff members made 20 site visits to CCRPs. More than 75 persons were interviewed during these visits. An attempt was made to site visit a cross section of project types. An attempt was also made to visit CCRPs with administrative staffs of various types and sizes. In addition, projects were selected for site visits on the basis of their cooperation with this research study, their apparent intensity of activity, and in some cases, their mention by experts. Our project staff tried to speak with all levels of staff involved in project operation, record keeping personnel, citizen participants in the project, pertinent city officials, and evaluators of projects. Whenever possible, our staff also made an effort to attend an actual project activity, such as a group or home presentation. The site visits to CCRPs provided valuable information, which has been incorporated in the assessment of the state of the knowledge about CCRPs.

*LEAA funded projects were not eligible for the honorarium.

E. Coding of Questionnaire Responses

A sample of 16 questionnaires was used to construct coding categories for open-ended items. Two coders agreed on categories for each of these items and wrote explanations of the responses that could be included in those categories. All data (open- and closed-ended questions) were then coded and prepared for computer analysis. Each project's computer file totaled 372 variables.

F. Project Files

A file was established for each project which could include the telephone screening interview form, the CCRP questionnaire, site visit notes, project literature, press releases, progress reports, evaluation reports, and other relevant records and information. In addition, forms were constructed by our staff that served as a guide for reviewing the files of each project. Effort and impact variables were highlighted in the written review of each project's evaluations, progress reports, and means of record keeping received*. Numerous attempts were made to try to obtain as much supporting information as possible from participating projects.

G. Advisory Committee

An advisory committee of eight persons was selected from among the experts and project directors previously contacted in telephone interviews or site visits. The committee consisted of project directors, planners, and evaluators. The committee members attended a conference in Chicago sponsored by this project to review and respond to the initial findings of our NEP study. The content of the conference discussions and conclusions, like the site visit field research, contributed to the assessment of CCRPs detailed in following sections.

VI. Project Typology

After careful examination of the data collected, it was determined that a classification system of six CCRP project types well summarized the 78 projects**. The types of projects included in this study are classified into two major categories, each having three project types. Category I consists of projects that facilitate the means of reporting suspicious/criminal activities. Category II

*Critiques are on file with NILEJC as an appendix to the final report.

**It is important to note that names used by projects do not always accurately describe the characteristics of that project. For example, Neighborhood Watch, is used by projects that give presentations only to civic groups, as well as by projects which actually operate in neighborhoods.

consists of projects that use an educational approach to encourage witness reporting of suspicious/criminal activities. The following is a descriptive overview of the project types. Assessment information regarding CCRPs is presented later in this summary report.

A. Category I: Projects Which Facilitate Reporting

1. Whistlestop Projects. Whistlestop projects facilitate the reporting of in-progress street crimes by witnesses and victims through a whistle alert system that signals residents in their homes to call the police. The sound of the whistle also signals persons walking in the area that someone is in need of help. The two Whistlestop projects reviewed in this study were administered by non-law enforcement agencies. In Chicago, Whistlestop projects are sponsored by volunteer-based community organizations and block clubs. Persons wishing to participate in the project purchase Whistlestop packets from storefront community organizations or from local shopkeepers. The packets include information on how to use the whistle and how to report a whistle incident to the police. The instructional information stresses that persons who witness a street crime should not intervene personally in the situation, but use the whistle to alert persons near a telephone to call the police. The awareness of Whistlestop in the target community would ideally be such that persons hearing the sound of the whistle would know they should call the police immediately. In Chicago, the Whistlestop Community Service¹⁷ supplies organizational manuals and Whistlestop packets to the implementing community organizations and block clubs. Whistlestop Community Service estimates that more than 100,000 whistles have been purchased by Chicago residents.

2. Radio Watch Projects. Participation in Radio Watch CCRPs is usually limited to citizens whose occupations give them access to taxis or trucks with two-way radios but may also include individuals who have citizen band or ham radios in their cars. Crime reporting by these persons, who are normally isolated from direct contact with the police, is facilitated by communication with the two-way radio dispatcher, who calls the police for the driver. Participants in the project are asked to report suspicious/criminal activities and public hazards (fire, traffic accidents).

Most Radio Watch projects are a relatively low-cost and low-effort venture for the implementing agency. They usually involve a training program for drivers and dispatchers, and participants often meet with project staff on a regular basis. Radio Watch projects are frequently cooperative efforts between business and law enforcement agencies. In New York City, the police department's Community Affairs Division works with the First National City Bank on the Civilian Radio Taxi Patrol Project⁴⁴. The bank supplies funds for instructional materials and identifying decals for taxis, while the police department provides the staff for developing interest on the part of cab companies and for training drivers and dispatchers. Motorola International Inc.⁴⁰ supplies brochures and stickers to the Community Radio Watch projects nationally. Radio Watch projects represent eight of the 78 CCRPs surveyed.

3. Special Telephone Line Projects. Eighteen surveyed projects offered special telephone lines to facilitate anonymous reporting of suspicious/criminal activities. The special telephone lines have a different number from the regular police emergency number. Special Telephone Line projects are usually publicized through channels such as billboards, newspapers, and radio and television public service announcements. Some agencies mention their Special Telephone Line regularly at crime prevention presentations made to civic, service, or school groups. This project type can be divided into two subtypes: (a) those that offer reward incentives; and (b) those that do not offer rewards.

The Special Telephone Line projects that offer rewards typically pay money only for information leading to a conviction. The amount of the award is often decided upon by a committee of citizens. These reward projects are operated more often by civilian agencies than any other project type. For instance, WeTIP⁴⁸ (We Turn in Pushers) of Pomona, California, is administered statewide by a nonprofit private organization. The WeTIP project solicits narcotics information on an anonymous basis, and informs the appropriate law enforcement agencies of tips received. Since 1972, WeTIP has received an average of 2,300 tips per year. While many reward projects are directed only toward narcotics crimes, some solicit information on all types of crimes.

The Special Telephone Line projects that do not offer rewards more often deal with information on all types of criminal activities. They are also more likely to be administered by law enforcement agencies than are reward projects. Some special telephone lines are manned by a 24-hour staff, while others are answered by recording devices which are checked frequently by agency personnel. The anonymous "Crime Stop"⁵⁴ line of the San Antonio Police Department is staffed by four civilians under the direction of a police lieutenant. Since 1972 an average of 28,000 calls per year has been received by the Crime Stop telephone line. In Salinas, California, the police department has an automatic "Tip Line"⁵³ that records anonymous nonemergency information about crime. This telephone recording device is monitored regularly by an officer from the Salinas Crime Suppression/Community Relations Unit, and information is channeled to the appropriate police division for investigation. A special telephone line that is answered by a recording device is well suited for nonemergency reports.

B. Category II: Educational Projects

The following three project types resemble one another in that they attempt to encourage witness reporting through a variety of educational approaches. An example of a CCRP program of national scope that uses one or more of the education approaches described below is National Neighborhood Watch⁴¹, an LEAA-supported program administered by the National Sheriffs' Association. The descriptions of the project types below are arranged according to the degree of involvement required of the citizen participant. The first project type requires the least involvement for the citizen, while the last requires the most.

1. Group Presentation Projects. The primary educational approach employed by this project type is group presentations to civic and service groups, schools, PTAs, church groups and other community groups. Information concerning these projects is usually distributed to the general public at shopping centers or county fair displays. All the Group Presentation projects surveyed in this study are administered by the community relations or crime prevention units of police or sheriff's departments. Group Presentation projects require little involvement on the part of the citizen, other than attending a presentation or stopping to talk with an officer at a shopping center display. The group presentations are usually a "one shot" crime prevention treatment. The officer giving the presentation provides information concerning home security and target-hardening techniques, as well as encouragement to citizens to report all suspicious/criminal activities to the police. Some projects give instruction on what constitutes suspicious/criminal activity, what descriptive information is important, and how to report such information to the police. Films or slides are frequently used in the presentation along with lecture, and question and answer techniques. Most Group Presentation projects distribute literature about crime prevention and crime reporting to citizens attending the presentation. For instance, the Cook County²³, Illinois, Sheriff's Department distributes literature supplied by the National Sheriffs' Association to citizens attending their Neighborhood Watch group presentations. In their group presentations and shopping center displays, this project also shows a film, "Neighborhood Watch". Other Group Presentation projects design their own literature for distribution to the public. In most cases, Group Presentation projects rely on media channels to obtain requests for group presentations. The Group Presentation project type is represented by 19 of the CCRPs surveyed.

2. Membership Projects. These CCRPs use essentially the same educational approach as Group Presentation projects, but require a greater involvement from the citizen than mere attendance at a presentation. Participants in Membership projects usually sign up to become a member of the project at a group presentation given by the administering agency. Participants in the Membership projects are usually given membership identification cards. Many Membership projects use the guarantee of anonymity as an incentive for participation, and some provide participants with a code number to use in reporting suspicious/criminal activities. The agencies that administer Membership projects usually maintain a list of the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of participants. For example, in Rockford, Illinois⁵¹, the Chamber of Commerce and the police department co-sponsor a Chec-Mate project designed to provide citizens with an anonymous means of reporting suspicious/criminal activities. At all crime prevention presentations the Rockford Police Department passes out Chec-Mate application cards and provides a brief explanation about how Chec-Mate works. Citizens wishing to participate in Chec-Mate fill out the application and mail the self-addressed card to the Chamber. The Chamber assigns each applicant a code number and adds each name and address to the list of Chec-Mates. The Chamber then sends each applicant a code number and an identification card.

Membership projects, like Group Presentation projects, use low cost publicity to solicit requests for presentations. Eight of the CCRPs surveyed are Membership projects.

3. Home Presentation Projects. The highest priority activity of these CCRPs is presentations to neighborhood groups in a resident's home; in addition, many Home Presentation projects also give group presentations and have a form of membership for participants. The Home Presentation project type is represented by twenty-three of the projects surveyed. Group presentations and publicity are used to obtain requests for home presentations. Some Home Presentation projects also use door-to-door canvassing to solicit hosts for home presentations. About 70% of the Home Presentation projects surveyed are administered by law enforcement agencies. The remaining 30% are administered by community groups or civilian-run city agencies.

Home Presentation projects can be further subdivided into two groups: (a) those that give "one shot" crime prevention home presentations; and (b) those that attempt to organize and sustain a block group. In both cases the actual presentations themselves are basically similar. Between ten and twenty neighbors meet in another neighbor's home to hear a CCRP representative speak about home security and property marking techniques, and to receive instruction about crime reporting. Home presentations differ from group presentations in that the concept of watching out for and getting to know one's neighbor is stressed. Often neighbors exchange names, addresses, and telephone numbers. As in group presentations, audio-visual aids are frequently used, and project literature is distributed to citizens attending the home presentation.

The Neighborhood Watch⁴⁶ project of the Douglas County, Nebraska, Sheriff's Department is an example of a Home Presentation project that provides a one-time crime prevention program. The project is administered by a one-person Crime Prevention Unit. The public is informed about the availability of home presentations primarily through group presentations to PTAs, community groups, and civic and service organizations. Persons requesting home presentations are responsible for notifying their neighbors. The home presentations begin with a home security tour of the host's home. Next a film on home security is shown followed by instruction about crime reporting. The neighbors attending the presentation also make maps that include the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of their immediate neighbors. They are encouraged to use these maps to provide the police with precise locations when reporting suspicious/criminal activities in their neighborhood. After this initial meeting, each individual block group is free to decide whether it will elect block leaders and/or have subsequent meetings. The project operator has no follow up contact with block groups unless a group contacts him.

Another Home Presentation project, the Community Crime Prevention Program (CCPP) Block Watch Project⁵⁸, in Seattle, Washington goes beyond the initial home presentation to provide structure and follow-up contact with block groups. The project is implemented by a 16-member staff of a civilian-run city agency. Hosts for home presentations are solicited by the canvassing of neighborhoods. Residents in a neighborhood are informed (through formal invitations hand-delivered by the host) that a home presentation will be given in their area.

This home presentation is similar to other group and home presentations previously described. As in the Nebraska Neighborhood Watch project, an important part of the Seattle home presentation is filling in a map of the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of neighborhood residents. Block leaders are then elected at the end of the presentation. The block leader is responsible for distributing CCRP newsletters to block group participants and for organizing further block meetings and activities if necessary. The Seattle block groups are also encouraged to broaden their scope to include other neighborhood problems and to contact the CCRP to arrange for representatives of other city agencies to speak at block meetings. In addition, seminars for block leaders about the criminal justice system are sponsored periodically by the Seattle CCRP.

C. Theoretical Counterstrategies for Nonreporting

Another way in which to illustrate the differences among the various project types is to examine how each type might deal with the reasons why people fail to report crimes to the police. Table 1 illustrates possible reasons why citizens do not report crimes they have witnessed, and suggests potential ways with which to counter these reasons. The purpose of this table is to show how the CCRP project types might deal with the various reasons for the nonreporting of crimes or suspicious events. The reasons for nonreporting were derived from three sources: interviews with experts, questionnaire responses from project directors, and relevant social science research.⁶ The information regarding the project type that might use a particular counterstrategy is based upon our conceptual frameworks of project types. Of course, not all projects within a project type actually use the counterstrategies suggested. On the other hand, some particular CCRPs, because of their comprehensive nature, may utilize more than the counterstrategies checked. Table 1, however, indicates what we consider to be the major focus of each of the project types.

VII. Generalized CCRP Framework

Figure 2 illustrates the generalized framework of activities and assumptions, and impact of a typical CCRP. This framework was developed from an extensive study of the apparent* assumptions connecting CCRP activities and outcomes.

A. CCRP Domain

1. designate a target population;
2. create an awareness of and a positive attitude toward the CCRP;
3. commit participants to crime reporting;
4. educate participants; and

* The use of the word "apparent" is intentional. Information gathered by site visits, telephone interviews, and questionnaires indicated that most project operators had not explicitly conceptualized the links between project activities and outcomes.

Table 1

Reason for not Reporting and Potential Counterstrategies by each Project Type

			Project Type							
			Category I				Category II			
Reason	Counterstrategies		WhistleStop	Radio Watch	Reward	Nonreward	Group Presentation	Membership	Unorganized Block	Organized Block
					Phone Lines				Home Presents.	
1. Did not see it happen	Encourage heightened surveillance		X	X			X	X	X	X
2. Saw it but does not think it was a crime	Educate so can identify crimes		X	X					X	X
3. Does not know how to report	Educate on how to report		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
4. Thinks others will report (diffusion of responsibility)	Educate about phenomenon		X	X					X	X
5. Too inconvenient to report	Make reporting easier		X	X	X	X				
6. Fear of consequences of reporting (e.g., retaliation, embarrassment, others may disapprove)	Provide anonymity; provide protection; present evidence on community's norms		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
7. Feel police would not want to be bothered (not serious enough)	Inform citizens about police willingness to respond			X			X	X	X	X
8. Distrust police (anticipate poor treatment by police)	Improve police performance; change attitude towards police			X			X	X	X	X
9. Feel it would not matter if reported (ineffective criminal justice system)	Improve system; demonstrate system effectiveness			X			X	X	X	X
10. Apathy 1 (does not care about consequences to victim)	Build community cohesiveness; develop empathy									X
11. Apathy 2 (does not want to report for other reasons, e.g., other costs, not feel need)	Provide incentives, e.g., awards and rewards; foster commitment to report		X	X	X			X	X	X

Note. An "X" identifies a project type which, in our judgement, is structured to employ a specific counterstrategy.

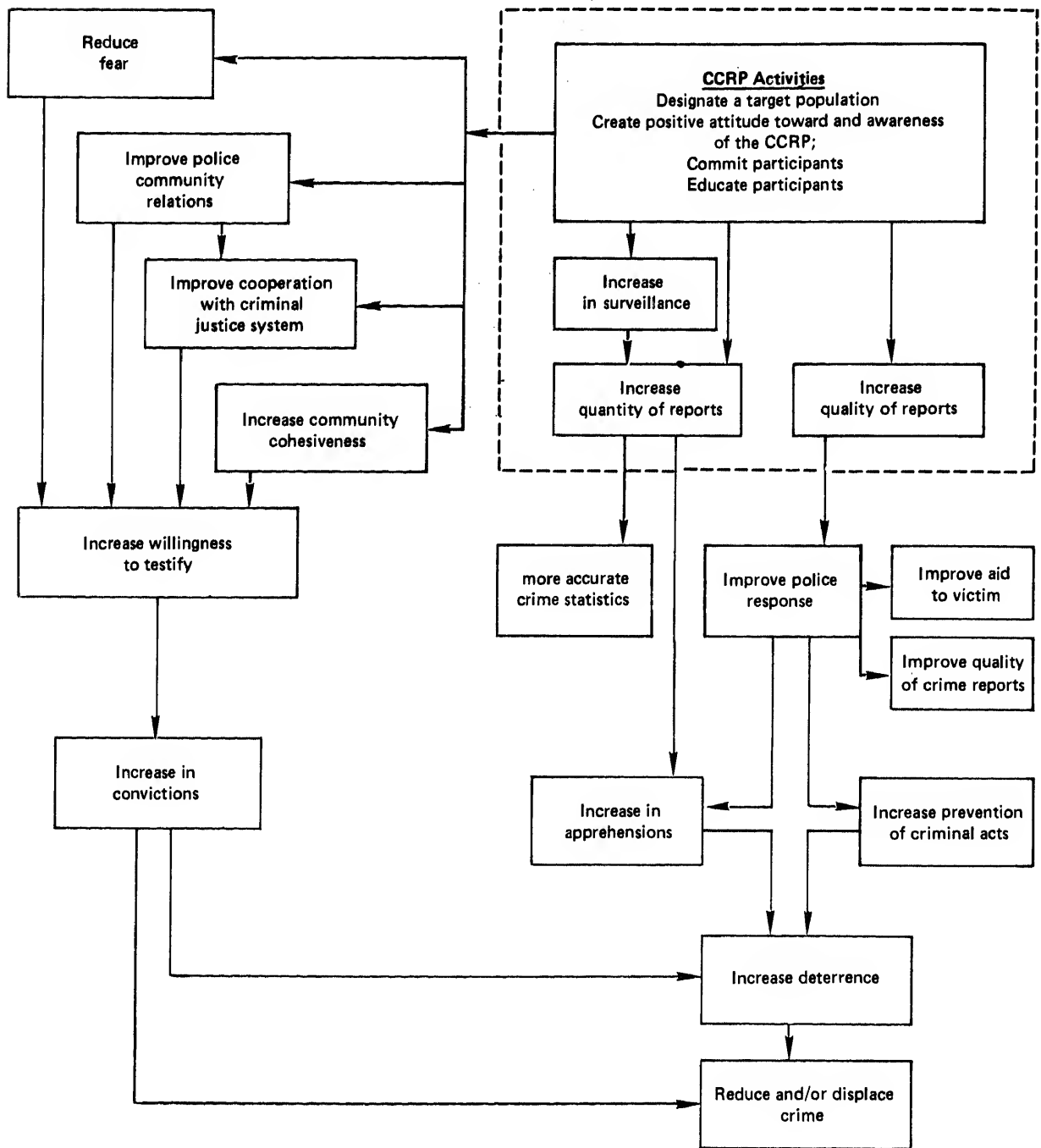


FIGURE 2
GENERALIZED CCRP FRAMEWORK

--- CCRP DOMAIN

5. create an impact on behavior so as to increase participant's amount of surveillance*, quantity of reports, and/or quality of reports.

The above mentioned activities and impacts are, in our judgment, within the domain of CCRPs. (Their meaning and effects will be dealt with in greater detail later in this report). By that we mean that CCRPs should be able to directly influence the quantity and quality of reports to the police. The area in Figure 2 outside the dotted line, which will be described next, are impacts and activities in which a CCRP is merely one contributing factor. The assumed impacts presented in this figure are only positive ones. Potential negative impacts (e.g., vigilantism) have not been included. In addition, for simplicity, no feedback loops are included. Forces other than CCRPs may be more potent in these areas**.

B. Assumed Impacts Beyond CCRP Domain

It is assumed that CCRPs contribute to; (1) a reduction of fear; (2) an improvement in police-community relations; (3) improvement in citizen cooperation with the Criminal Justice system; and (4) an increase in community cohesiveness. These positive side effects will, in turn, lead to an increased willingness of participants of the CCRP to testify in court.

The increase in the quantity of reports will produce more accurate crime statistics. That is, authorities would now be aware of crimes that previously would have gone unreported. The increase in the quantity of reports will lead to an increase in apprehensions, i.e., a mere increase in the number of reports would lead to more criminals being apprehended. Yet, this is not to say that a mere increase in the quantity of reports would increase the ratio of apprehensions to reports.

An "increase in quality of reports" means that there will be more reports of in-progress crimes, better descriptions of suspects, and more detailed and accurate descriptions of the location of the crime. We would also expect that reports would be made to the police department with greater speed and clarity. This increase in quality of reports will lead to an improved police response. That is, police should arrive on the scene sooner (due to the increase in the speed of reporting), will arrive more often at the correct location, and will be more likely to have an accurate description

*Schneider and Eagle⁵⁶ provide an interesting mathematical model concerning the relationship between surveillance and the probability that a "random outlaw" will be observed. Their model includes such variables as amount of time spent observing, the number of watchers, the probability that appropriate action will be taken, the efficiency of the watchers, and the time the outlaw is in the area.

**At present, not enough information is known that would enable us to provide comment on the relative importance of the contributing factors.

of suspects. Since the police will arrive at the proper location soon after the incident, they will be better able to aid the victim. Also, the quality of the police offense report would be improved by better witness performance.

The improvement in police response will lead to two other impacts. There will be an increase in the quantity of apprehensions because of the more accurate police response. Of equal or greater importance is the possibility that police will arrive on a scene in time to prevent a criminal act. As citizens will make more calls concerning suspicious incidents prompt police investigation of these incidents will lead to prevention of a criminal act through their presence or field investigations.

The increased willingness of witnesses to testify in court will lead to an increase in convictions. The increase in convictions combined with the increase in apprehensions and increase in prevention of criminal acts will lead to an increase in deterrence. Some of this deterrence will be caused by a growing awareness of an increase in convictions, some will be caused by the perceived increase of apprehensions, and other deterrence will result from aggressive police investigation of suspicious incidents.

The increase in convictions will lead to reduction in crime. The specific contribution of this factor would be the incarceration of local criminals. An increase in deterrence will also result in a reduction in crime or displacement to other crimes or other areas.

It should be clear from the above description that the number of assumptions leading from CCRP activities to reduction of crime approaches heroic proportions. Therefore, we have chosen not to evaluate CCRPs on the basis of their impact on crime. Instead we have chosen measurements closer to CCRP activities as realistic evaluation points.

VIII. Assessment of CCRPs

A. Project Characteristics

From the data collected from our questionnaire, a profile of the CCRPs studied can be outlined:

The geographical distribution of the 78 projects accurately reflects the density of CCRPs throughout the United States (for project locations see Figure 1). About 60% of the projects are situated in cities greater than 100,000 in population. Seventy-five per cent of the projects are administered by law enforcement agencies, while 25% are run by city agencies, civic groups or other community organizations. In addition, some projects work in direct cooperation with other groups; 17% are affiliated with a Chamber of Commerce; and 15% with community service organizations. Most CCRPs (90%) are administered by organizations which administer other crime prevention projects as well: 86% coexist with Operation I.D.; 72% with Home Security Inspections; 37% with a Crisis Hotline; and 15% with Citizen Patrols.

Sixty-five per cent of the CCRPs are administered by at least one full-time staff person. Of these, approximately

one-third are single person operations. In addition, 12% of the CCRPs have part-time staff and 13% have volunteer workers. Only 20% of the projects were able to provide budget information; these projects had budgets which ranged from a low of less than \$100 to a high of \$1,000,000 (East Lansing TIP)²⁷. Approximately one-third of the projects are funded through federal or state LEAA grants. In addition, 23% of the CCRPs received financial support from business groups, 19% from citizens, and 15% from community organizations.

The length of existence of the CCRPs surveyed ranged from one year to more than eight years, with a median project life of 2.7 years. Ninety per cent of the projects are currently operated by the same organization that started them. The original idea for starting 32% of the CCRPs came from another project's brochure. Many CCRPs have received assistance in planning their activities: 26% have received advice from crime prevention experts; 24% from other CCRPs; 24% from local agencies; and 17% from federal agencies. In addition, 72% of the CCRPs provide assistance to other projects.

Approximately 70% of the CCRP operators indicated that their project is at least "somewhat" successful. While many operators (33%) could not give a reason for their evaluation, some (14%) cited changes in the number of arrests or other crime statistics, while others (39%) based their rating on the number and activity level of CCRP participants. When asked what plan existed for future CCRP activities, 46% of the project operators indicated plans to expand, 28% planned to remain the same and 14% planned to modify or eliminate the activities carried out by their CCRP*. These future plans did not correlate with the project operators' ratings of success.

B. Structure of Critical Assessment Issues

The assessment of CCRPs effort and performance follows the framework of steps within the CCRP's domain:

1. designation of target area;
2. creation of awareness and positive attitude;
3. commitment of participants;
4. education of participant; and
5. impact on participant's crime reporting behavior.

1. Designation of Target Area. The first step in implementing a CCRP should be clear designation of a target area. This target area is defined as a geographical unit (e.g., city, city and suburbs, county, etc.) that identifies those citizens to be contacted and participate in CCRP activities. In addition, some CCRPs can designate a "comparison group,"²⁴ i.e., areas or citizens that are not contacted and do not participate in CCRP activities. (This will allow projects

*The remaining 12% did not indicate future plans.

to better evaluate their impact*.) Defining a target area identifies for the CCRP citizens toward which they are to direct their activities, and ultimately where to look for an impact.

2. Creation of Awareness and Positive Attitude. Once a target area is designated the CCRP should then decide upon the means it will employ to make the citizens in the target area aware of the project's existence. Of central importance to the creation of awareness is the decision of whether citizens are to be actively and/or passively contacted. For example, will the project use personal contact of citizens by staff members or use a media campaign to promote awareness? An additional issue concerns the impression the CCRP initially creates on the citizen, i.e., what will be the citizen's attitude toward the project.

3. Commitment. Once awareness of a CCRP has been created in the target area, the project is ready to commit citizens to crime reporting. This effort involves activities used by the CCRP to enlist participants who are committed to perform the crime reporting behaviors prescribed by the project.

4. Education. Following or coincidental with the commitment of participants a CCRP may provide some form of education in an attempt to: (a) make participants aware of the need for increased surveillance; (b) improve participants' ability to recognize suspicious/criminal activities; and (c) improve participants' knowledge of how to provide good reports.

5. Impact on Crime Reporting Behavior. Following the four previous steps the CCRP has potentially created an impact in the target area that may result in: (a) an increase in the amount of surveillance; (b) an increase in the quantity of reports regarding suspicious/criminal activities; and (c) an improvement in the quality of reports.

C. Summary Findings of Critical Assessment Issues

1. Designation of Target Area. Nearly all CCRPs (96%) did specify some definable target area, in terms of geographical unit or number of persons. The most frequent form of implementation was for the CCRP to designate an entire city as its target area (49%). Table 2 shows the target areas used by the various project types.

We have found that not enough systematic planning prior to the commencement of CCRPs has taken place concerning:

- a. how large a target area should be designated, given the resources and the nature of the CCRP; and
- b. how many citizens within the target area would be contacted and be expected to participate in CCRP activities.

This general lack of systematic planning in designating a target area makes it difficult for most CCRPs to validly interpret any observed changes in impact measures. For some project types (Radio Watch, and Special Phone-Lines) it is not evident that CCRPs should or can

*Volume III: Evaluation Manual for CCRPs contains further information on this topic.

Table 2

NUMBER OF PROJECTS DESIGNATING DIFFERENT TYPES OF TARGET AREA.

PROJECT TYPE	LESS THAN CITY WIDE	CITYWIDE	CITY AND SUBURBS	ONE OR MORE COUNTIES	STATE- WIDE
RADIO WATCH		3	2	2	
WHISTLESTOP			1	1	
NON-REWARD PHONE LINE		6	2	3	1
REWARD PHONE LINE				3	3
GROUP PRESENTATION		13	4	1	
MEMBERSHIP		5	1	2	
HOME PRESENTATION	3	11	4	4	
% OF TOTAL	4%	49%	18%	21%	5%

limit their services to select sub-areas; but for the remaining types, especially the Home Presentations projects, systematic implementation within a city represents the preferred approach; it not only helps concentrate project efforts, but also aids the interpretability of project impact. A second point concerns the finding that CCRPs do not, in general, keep uniform information on the demographic characteristics (e.g., sex, age, race, etc.) of their target area citizens and actual participants. Without such basic descriptive information, any CCRP claim of impact on participant's reporting behavior will remain subject to criticism of "selection confounds"¹⁶. That is, the impact could be due merely to the participation of certain kinds of citizens. The lack of these data also leaves CCRPs defenseless to the possible criticism that they may be servicing only middle-class individuals and avoiding areas where implementation may be more difficult.

2. Creation of Awareness and Positive Attitude. Most CCRPs use a combination of the following techniques to make citizens aware of their project: (a) use of media; (b) distribution of literature and stickers; (c) distribution of novelty items; and (d) personal contact. Table 3 shows the percentage of CCRPs using various creation of awareness techniques. Table 4 shows the CCRPs which provided evidence for the number of group presentations and/or the attendance figures for these presentations. These techniques vary in the number of potential contacts they provide, the cost and effort they require for implementation, and their potential for initially creating a positive attitude towards the CCRP. Few CCRPs attempted to document the number or proportion of their target area citizens who are aware of the CCRP's existence. Only two awareness surveys were conducted in a manner that we can interpret the results with confidence; Florida Help Stop Crime²⁸ found an awareness level of 60% and a survey concerning Chicago (Hyde Park) Whistlestop found that 82% of the sample was aware of the project⁴⁹. However, from an examination of Tables 3 and 4 it is clear that in other locations many citizens are being exposed to CCRPs. In many cities a significant portion of the population have attended a presentation. Many more citizens have most likely been exposed to the CCRP through mass media. On the basis of the effort expended by CCRPs and the findings of the Florida and Hyde Park surveys it is our judgment that citizens are generally aware of CCRPs where efforts are made to publicize their existence.

Finally, we have found that, in general, CCRPs do not explicitly recognize that their awareness techniques also create an initial attitude on the part of the citizen toward the project.

3. Commitment. Mere awareness by citizens of a CCRP's existence and purposes does not, in itself, indicate a citizen's commitment to surveillance and crime reporting. Realizing this, all CCRPs employ techniques which attempt to commit citizens to participate in surveillance and/or crime reporting. These techniques fall into three categories: (a) attempts to increase the benefits associated with crime reporting (e.g., providing rewards); (b) attempts to decrease the costs associated with crime reporting (e.g., providing anonymity); and (c) attempts to encourage behaviors which are consistent with crime reporting (e.g., becoming a member of a CCRP). CCRPs that

Table 3

Percentage of CCRPs Using Various Creation-of-Awareness Techniques

Project Type	Use of Media							Distribute Literature and Stickers				Personal Contact			
	Radio	T.V.	Newspapers	Billboards	Posters	PSAs	Magazine Ads	Brochures	Bumper and Phone Stickers	I.D.	Membership	Distribute Novelty Items	Displays	Canvassing	Letters
Radio Watch (8)	25	25	63	0	50	13	13	75	13	25	13	50	0	0	25
WhistleStop (2)	0	0	50	0	50	0	0	0	50	0	0	0	50	50	50
Reward Phone Lines (6)	33	33	67	33	67	33	0	50	67	0	0	33	0	0	0
Non-Reward Phone Lines (12)	25	25	75	25	25	8	0	83	33	17	0	33	17	8	33
Group Presentation (19)	37	32	58	11	37	5	0	90	42	47	16	0	26	16	26
Membership (8)	25	25	75	0	25	25	0	88	0	25	0	50	25	25	13
Home Presentation (23)	57	44	65	30	35	17	4	100	30	39	22	44	52	30	22

Note. Numbers in parentheses indicate number of surveyed projects in each project type.

Table 4

Number of Group Presentation

Category II Project	Number Presentations	Number Participants	Time Period
Neighborhood Alert, Presno	85	5,379	1/74-9/74
PIEPAN Manteca	54	approx. 9,000	5/74-4/75
Neighborhood Watch Jacksonville	50	unknown	9/71-7/75
Neighborhood Alert St. Petersburg	347	17,485	1/74-11/75
Help Stop Crime Tampa	21	210	1/75-11/75
Neighborhood Watch Maywood	---	approx. 24,000	5/73-7/75
Crime Alert Indianapolis	---	approx. 25,000	1974
Neighborhood Watch Cedar Rapids	11	unknown	7/74-7/75
Crime Alert Louisville	---	150	7/74-7/75
Crime Check New Orleans	39	over 10,000	7/74-7/75
Crime Check Fall River	---	approx. 25,000	7/74-7/75
Minnesota Crime Watch Eden Prairie	---	approx. 2,000	---
Minnesota Crime Watch Golden Valley	---	300	1974
Crime Blockers St. Louis	50	unknown	7/70-7/75
Neighborhood Watch Omaha	427	31,037	2/73-10/75
Neighborhood Security Unit Mineola	300	approx. 22,000	1969-6/75
Blockwatchers New York City	73	unknown	10/72-7/75
Neighborhood Watch Norman	---	1,775	7/74-12/74
Anti-Burglary Campaign Portland	727	unknown	1974
Community Crime Prevention and Education Multnomah	330	approx. 8,220	nine months
CLASP Philadelphia	---	approx. 3,000	7/74-7/75
Neighborhood Watch Memphis	147	approx. 50,000	7/73-7/75
Neighborhood Watch Garland	---	approx. 5,000	2/74-2/75
Friends for a Safe Neighborhood Mesquite	---	approx. 10,000	3/74-3/75
BlockWatchers Seattle	---	approx. 3,000	7/74-7/75

Note. This information is based on progress reports and/or site visits.

can identify specific reports with their project (e.g., Radio Watch projects) are in a better position to answer questions regarding the size of the impact of their commitment efforts. (See Table 5). Yet this figure (the number of reports) is most likely to be an underestimate of the total number committed*. An additional difficulty in measuring commitment is due to its psychological nature. Given these problems it is not surprising to find that CCRPs do not know the number or proportion of their target population that is actually committed to crime reporting.

A final point regards our judgment that it is important for projects to know the longevity of the commitment they foster¹⁵. Only in this way will they have a strong foundation upon which to base future project decisions about how to best foster and possibly renew commitment.

4. Education. It was found that 57% of the projects, primarily representing CCRPs in Category II, used explicit educational activities (e.g., show films, give lectures, and distribute training manuals) aimed at improving their participants' ability to recognize suspicious/criminal activities and/or to provide reports of good quality. The remaining 43% of CCRPs provide some educational information, at least implicitly. We found a gap in knowledge regarding the lack of attempts to measure the immediate effectiveness of the educational activities, i.e., how much do participant's learn from these activities? This gap is a critical one, as projects and law enforcement agencies tend to base decisions on the assumption that CCRP participants have in fact been properly educated¹⁴.

5. Impact on Reporting Behavior. One-half of the CCRPs indicated that there has been an increase in the quantity of reports because of their project's activities. These conclusions were based on data such as the number of reports identified with their project (see Table 5) and a change in the number of in-progress calls. In our opinion these conclusions may not be appropriate because of the lack of a relevant comparison group. Thus, it is not possible to determine if the changes that occurred would have happened without the CCRP's activities, i.e., we are not questioning whether a change occurred but to what do you attribute this change. Approximately one-third indicated an increase in quality of reports related to their project. These conclusions were based on observations such as feedback from dispatchers and investigators on some good calls from CCRP participants. In our opinion these conclusions may not be appropriate because of their questionable reliability (i.e., a few above average reports may be remembered better than the majority of average reports). Therefore, it is our judgment that no CCRP has data that should be interpreted as showing that its participants have increased their: (a) surveillance; (b) quantity of reporting; or (c) quality of reporting. This is not to say that no project has valid measurement techniques. For example, a project evaluation⁵⁹ for Block Watchers,

*This follows from the reasoning that not all committed citizens will see a suspicious/criminal activity to report.

Table 5

CCRPs Which Can Identify Calls with Project

<u>Name</u>	<u>Target Designation</u>	<u>Number of Reports</u>	<u>Number of Arrests</u>	<u>Number of Convictions</u>	<u>Time Period</u>
<u>Radio Watch</u>					
Community Radio Watch, Palo Alto	radio dispatched vehicles in Palo Alto	1,002	29 arrests	unknown	11/73 - 11/75
Radio Alert, Oakland	radio dispatched vehicles in Oakland	102	unknown	unknown	7/74 - 12/74
Community Radio Watch, Mineola	2,569 radio dispatched vehicles in Nassau County, New York	9,000	15 arrests	unknown	1/74 - 1/76
<u>Reward Phone Lines</u>					
TIP, East Lansing	State of Michigan	9,197	1,222 arrests	unknown	1/74 - 6/75
TIP, Baton Rouge	Baton Rouge, population 320,000	7,568	unknown	unknown	1/73 - 4/74
Silent Observer, Battle Creek	Battle Creek Metro Area, population 100,000	808	unknown	86 convictions	1/71 - 6/75
Silent Observer, Bay City	Bay County Michigan, population 120,000	60	unknown	15 convictions	7/74 - 7/75
WeTIP, Pomona	State of California	8,000	759 arrests	516 convictions	1972 - 1975
<u>Non-Reward Phone Lines</u>					
Hotline, Palo Alto	Palo Alto metropolitan area	15	0 arrests	0 convictions	1/75 - 7/75
Rape, New York City	City of New York	796	unknown	unknown	1/74 - 12/74
Crime Confidential, San Jose	San Jose and surrounding suburbs	1,250	unknown	unknown	5/74 - 8/75
Tip Line, Salinas	Salinas, population 70,000	384	20 arrests	unknown	7/74 - 6/75
Crime Alert, Chattanooga	Chattanooga metropolitan area, population 300,000	2,809	207 arrests	unknown	4/75 - 7/75
Crime Stop, San Antonio	San Antonio, population 300,000	83,004	1884 arrests	unknown	1/72 - 12/74
<u>Membership</u>					
Block Watch, Lansing	Lansing, population 130,000	116	unknown	1 conviction	4/73 - 6/75
<u>Block</u>					
Crime Check, Watten	Warren, population 200,000	12	unknown	unknown	1/74 - 8/75

Seattle, compared the number of burglary-in-progress calls from target and control census tracts before and after the CCRP's implementation. These data indicate no relative increase in calls from the target area.

In an attempt to better understand the reasons underlying the apparent failure of many CCRPs to validly interpret their impact on reporting behavior, six measurement problems which contribute to the difficulty of drawing valid conclusions were identified:

- a. It is difficult to measure a citizen's intention to report because a suspicious/criminal activity must occur and a citizen must be present before an actual report can be made.
- b. It is difficult to measure the continuing commitment expected of participants by CCRPs.
- c. Even though some CCRPs can identify reports with their project, it remains unknown whether the report is also attributable to the project, i.e., would the report have been made regardless of the CCRP's existence.
- d. Using reported crime statistics for documenting a CCRP's impact can lead to erroneous interpretations because reported crime is a reflection of the incidence of victimization and the reporting rate in a target area.
- e. Use of victimization data for documenting a CCRP's impact on increased quantity of reports can lead to erroneous interpretations because if increased reporting does deter crime, a reduced level of victimization should lead eventually to fewer (not more) potential reports, i.e., a vicious circle.
- f. While most CCRPs are primarily oriented toward bystander (witness) reporting, available records on reporting, for the most part, reflect only victim reporting. This is a major difficulty.

Despite the absence of what we consider to be good quantifiable data it should be noted that many CCRP operators and experts in the field of crime prevention feel that CCRPs do make an impact on both the quality and quantity of reporting. These findings, while open to alternative explanations, should not be overlooked. Given the methodological difficulty in establishing a clear interpretation of actual reporting behavior, subjective opinion, theoretical perspectives and effort expended by CCRPs assume a greater importance in evaluating CCRPs.

D. Judgmental Assessment of Project Types

Although we have stated that there are not sufficient data to provide definite conclusions, we can provide a tentative assessment of project types' potential impact on reporting behavior. We offer the following statements regarding the effectiveness of CCRP types based on an integration of our literature and project reviews, interviews with project operators and crime prevention experts, and theoretical conceptualization of CCRPs.

1. Radio Watch Projects. Targeting on drivers of radio equipped vehicles is an efficient concentration of CCRP effort. There are a limited number of drivers who are mobile and large expenditures of money are not required as the vehicles are already radio-equipped. When these participants are committed and adequately educated Radio Watch projects will increase the amount of surveillance participants engage in. That is, they will be more aware of suspicious/criminal activities. By providing a means for these individuals to report, Radio Watch CCRPs accomplish two things: (a) participants have a recognized channel through which to report; and (b) suspicious/criminal activities that are unlikely to be seen and reported by other citizens will be reported. In addition, since Radio Watch participants are often skilled observers (e.g., cab drivers), educating them to make good quality reports should be successful. We therefore conclude that well implemented Radio Watch projects will significantly increase participant surveillance, increase the quantity of reports, and improve the quality of reports.

2. Whistlestop Projects. There is no indication that these CCRPs conduct intensive personal contact with their participants for commitment or educational purposes. In general these projects simply encourage the use of the whistles at the participants' discretion. Whistlestop projects are not primarily oriented towards an increase in surveillance or an improvement in the quality of reports. At present, there is no reliable evidence concerning the reaction of citizens who hear the whistle*. Given the lack of supporting data we are reluctant to draw any conclusions regarding the effectiveness of Whistlestop.

3. Special Telephone Line Projects. Phone Line Projects, in general, merely provide potential participants with a specific medium by which to report. There is no intensive personal contact of citizens by the project to encourage increased surveillance or to encourage an improvement in the quality of reports. Special Telephone Line CCRPs which also offer rewards elicit reports from citizens (e.g., other criminals) with access to specific information about suspicious/criminal activities**. It is our conclusion that, in general, Special Telephone Line projects will not significantly increase the quantity of reports as they tend to rely heavily on media. Sole use of media has not been found to specifically affect reporting behavior or behavior in general.²¹⁻²⁸⁻⁴⁵⁻⁵⁷

4. Group Presentations. Relying on a single group presentation coupled with the distribution of literature appears to be an approach that will have a limited impact on potential participant's reporting behavior. This judgment is based upon the above media research

*Although there have been a number of well publicized incidents where whistles proved helpful, no systematic evaluation of the projects has been conducted. A research study currently in progress may provide some answers.

**Personal Communication from K. Sholes, originator of Silent Observer (Battle Creek, Michigan), to P.J. Lavrakas, June, 1975.

as well as research dealing with helping behavior⁵⁻¹⁰. While some participants may improve their reporting behavior, we do not expect that the proportion of these citizens will be large. Without the use of additional techniques (e.g., follow-up meetings), it is our judgment that these CCRPs have minimal potential for impact upon reporting behavior. Group presentations may be effective in altering awareness, knowledge, attitudes and in generating requests for other services but not in changing reporting behavior.

5. Membership Projects. Membership projects on the whole are similar to Group Presentations, except that they explicitly enlist members. This additional characteristic is likely to provide Membership projects with an advantage over the Group Presentations approach, in that participants who become members have made their commitment to report publicly. Yet in the absence of continued contact of members by the CCRPs, we assume that the average member will not maintain his original level of commitment to crime reporting. However, without even basic research data we are reluctant to draw conclusions regarding membership projects impacts.

6. Home Presentations. Concentrating CCRP efforts in specific neighborhoods appears to be a more intense approach than large group presentations at business, civic, or community meetings. The participant-staff ratio will be smaller, and neighbors are being brought together to work toward the common goal of improved security in their immediate neighborhood. Depending upon the intensity of CCRP contact with these participants, and the degree of commitment of the participants, we assume that Home Presentation projects will have a significant positive impact on crime reporting behavior. This kind of positive impact appears most likely in those instances in which neighbors are organized into a group with some continuing structure, because this approach has the potential for neighbors reinforcing each other in their commitment to crime reporting. In addition, it is the type of project that can be effectively organized by citizens themselves³⁵.

E. Summary Findings of Potential Side Effect Issues

In addition to the critical assessment issues, seven possible side effects of CCRPs were identified:

1. change in police-community relations;
2. change in participants fear of crime;
3. overload on police facilities;
4. increased community cohesiveness;
5. increased criminalization of certain types of behavior;
6. increased unrealistic suspicion; and
7. increased vigilantism.

These additional issues regarding the impact of CCRPs were chosen on the basis of information gathered from interviews, and in the course of the development of the CCRP conceptual framework.

1. Change Police-Community Relations. Most CCRPs, by their

very nature, seek to improve the relationship between the community and the police. Of theoretical importance to this issue is the possibility that citizens' expectations concerning CCRPs' ability to "solve the problem" will be unrealistically raised. Approximately 50% of the project operators indicate an improvement in police-community relations as a result of their project activities. These findings were, in general, based on anecdotal evidence. As we are uncertain of the reliability of this evidence we cannot draw a firm conclusion regarding these improvements in police community relations. Only one project operator indicated a problem regarding unfulfilled expectations. Of special interest was a finding that 19% of the projects operators regarded an increase in the apparent crime rate (due to an expected increase in reporting) as a potential problem in their community.

2. Change Fear of Crime*. By focusing attention on the local crime problem, CCRPs may be contributing to an increase in fear/concern on the part of their target population. If this fear were to reach unrealistic proportions, we would regard it as a negative effect. On the other hand, it can be suggested that CCRPs can reduce fear of crime by providing citizens with the feeling that the citizens are actively involved in dealing with their local crime problem. Results supporting possible positive and negative side effects were found. In a Portland (Oregon) survey, 50% of the respondents indicated that they felt publicity about crime tended to make the public more fearful of crime**. On the other hand, in a survey dealing with Chicago Whistlestop, 60% of the respondents who had whistles indicated that they felt more secure while carrying a whistle⁴⁹. Yet, there is a general lack of information regarding CCRPs' impact on fear of crime.

3. Overload on Police Facilities. If a CCRP greatly increased the quantity of reported incidents, a conceivable result would be an overload on police facilities. At present, there is no indication that any CCRP has caused such an overload.

4. Increased Community Cohesiveness. One often hears that crime has reached its present proportion because there is no longer the "sense of neighborhood" that is said to have existed in the past. Home Presentation CCRPs strive to refoster a spirit of community cohesiveness, but none indicates knowing whether their efforts have contributed to this spirit. While this is, itself, an information gap, it is important to note that the assumption (that community cohesiveness will help improve crime reporting) is also untested. As noted earlier, increase in community cohesiveness and surveillance is also a goal of environmental design strategists.

5. Increased Criminalization of Behavior. Criminalization of behavior refers to instances in which a problem that had previously been dealt with by individuals outside the criminal justice system is instead referred to law enforcement authorities for solution. We have found no indication that there has been such an effect, although CCRPs do attempt to increase awareness of certain acts as

*See Furstenberg³³ for a theoretical discussion of fear of crime.

**Portland (Oregon) Anti-Burglary Campaign, 1975.

"crimes".

6. Increased Unrealistic Suspicion. Since CCRPs stress being aware of suspicious persons or incidents, it is possible that citizens will start to view many ordinary events as suspicious. While no project has assessed the possibility of this side effect, it is our impression from interviews that there does not presently exist a problem of unrealistic suspicion. Yet it is also our opinion that this potential negative side effect requires future consideration and systematic assessment.

7. Increased Vigilantism. When citizens are encouraged to involve themselves in law enforcement by being aware of suspicious/criminal activities, the possibility exists that they will attempt to become more actively involved in trying to remedy (on their own) what they consider to be unlawful. During site visits we were very much aware of this as a potential negative side effect. As such we did extensive probing of police officials and project operators. There was no indication that vigilantism is a problem with any CCRP.

F. Other Unresolved Issues

There are a number of other unresolved issues important to the assessment of CCRPs but which we did not consider to be either relevant measurement points nor potential side effects. These issues are, however, concerned with factors that we believe contribute to the effectiveness of a CCRP.

1. Crime Reduction. It may seem surprising that crime reduction is treated as a separate issue and not as a critical assessment issue or even a side effect. This is done for the following reasons:

- a. It is our judgment that CCRPs, by themselves, should not be expected to reduce crime*. The strength of a CCRP's impact on the system which produces crime is rather low as compared to other societal factors that affect the crime rate. However, it is not known how well CCRPs would compare to other crime reduction strategies such as preventive police patrol.
- b. Reported crime statistics are a combination of actual

*This judgment is not universally held. For example, Schneider and Eagle⁵⁶ on the basis of a mathematical model, conclude that "collective action programs may result in crime reduction of up to 10% in a geographical area if as few as three persons per city block are participating in the program and if these persons are able and willing to take effective action when they see a crime being committed" (summary). There are, of course, no empirical data to support such a conclusion.

On the other hand, our Advisory Council felt very strongly that it was unrealistic to expect a CCRP, by itself, to reduce the crime rate.

victimizations and the percentage of crimes reported to the police. Thus, it would be expected that if the victimization rate were to remain the same and a CCRP were to be successful in raising the reporting rate, crime would appear to have risen. It is presently unknown how long it would take for such an effect to occur. Before a true reduction in victimization would occur, the demands of the heroic assumptions detailed in Figure 2 would have to be met. The length of time this might take is also unknown.

- c. The use of official police statistics to evaluate crime reduction can be misleading³⁷.
- d. Projects implemented without any comparison group make valid conclusions very difficult¹⁶. Only 5% of the projects had any form of comparison or control group.
- e. Ninety-six per cent of the projects dealt inadequately with displacement effects.
- f. No CCRP has a sufficient number of valid data points to assess the project's impact on crime reduction²². A one-year, pre-post figure is simply unreliable from a sound methodological perspective, mainly because of the possibility of regression artifacts.

Despite these difficulties in linking CCRPs to crime reduction, 42% of the CCRPs listed crime reduction as their most important long-range goal, and the other 58% listed it as one of their secondary goals. Approximately one-third of the projects indicated that crime reduction was one of the best ways to evaluate their project's effectiveness. One-fifth of the projects actually claimed a reduction in crime as an effect of their project's activities. Only three projects (each a major crime prevention project)^{55, 59, 60} made a serious attempt to employ a valid research design on which to base their claims of reduced crime. At most, these projects can claim crime reduction for participants, and not for the area in which they operated. Unfortunately, all three designs were methodologically flawed, and this diminishes confidence in their conclusions. It is extremely difficult, and costly, to validly measure an impact on crime. It appears that for many projects crime reduction was claimed either because crime statistics were readily available (but not necessarily interpretable) and/or because it was politically advisable to make such a claim.

2. LEAA Grants. Of all surveyed projects, 38% reported that they were currently receiving some kind of LEAA grant. While there were a number of descriptive differences (budget size, activities, project age) between funded and unfunded projects, of critical concerns in our study were: (a) whether "better" data were available from funded projects; and (b) whether funded projects were more effective.

Our analysis indicated that there were no significant differences in the types of data available from funded and unfunded projects. The only survey information that funded projects collected more frequently than unfunded projects (36% vs. 11%) were surveys concerning fear. Although there were no differences in the possession

of the data elements we considered relevant for evaluation of project impact, funded projects more frequently had produced progress reports (75% vs. 47%) and evaluation reports (55% vs. 15%). These findings are consistent with our observations that these reports generally did not contain performance data. Thus, without reliable data, we cannot estimate the impact of funding on project effectiveness.

3. Cost Estimates. An extensive effort was made to obtain actual or estimated cost figures for CCRPs. Only 20% of the projects were able to give any estimates of costs*. These estimates ranged from one project⁴⁷ having no cost to another²⁷ indicating a budget of \$1,000,000. The cost figures provided by projects, in our judgment, are not comparable. Different projects included different factors in computing costs. Some CCRPs included all investigatory costs, while others did not include any personnel costs. Given this variability, no attempt can be made to evaluate the cost-effectiveness of CCRPs. An additional problem is comparing costs of CCRPs to alternative crime prevention activities. Without meaningful cost data for CCRPs, reliable comparisons are impossible.

4. Generalizability across Communities. The generalizability of projects from one community to another is dependent upon numerous factors. One of the most important, but difficult to document, factors is the quality of CCRP personnel. During site visits we have noted that the enthusiasm and leadership qualities of the project operator appeared to be critical to the project's operation.

The structure and character of the community are also important considerations. For example, Home Presentation projects, which stress neighborhood surveillance, may not be very successful in communities where both husband and wife work outside the home. Thus, a community should carefully examine the assumptions underlying a CCRP to determine whether it is appropriate given their make-up and needs.

5. Longevity. All CCRPs appear to assume that the activities of their project will not only have an immediate impact on the participants but that the impact will sustain itself and be evident when a crime occurs. This is a very important untested assumption. Crimes are relatively infrequent and it might be some time before a participant actually has the opportunity to put the project's recommended behaviors to a test. Thus, recollection of the crime reporting education and commitment at the time of the suspicious/criminal incident is critical. This suggests the need for continued project follow-up activities. If a project assumes that its activities have a permanent impact on participants (an unwise assumption in our opinion), then follow-up activities do not take place. If, however, projects assume that participants must be contacted again, then the burden on project resources is increased. The degree to which projects have sufficient resources needed for follow-up contact should therefore be considered in planning a CCRP.

*During site visits our staff members were informed that this was, in most cases, very difficult because no records were kept regarding budget breakdowns.

6. The Role of Behavioral Science Research. It is our observation that very few projects (an exception being Crime Check, New Orleans, Louisiana)⁴³ make use of available behavioral science research about why people do or do not report crimes. We feel that the effectiveness of projects could be enhanced if relevant information concerning reporting of crimes, in particular, and the means of modifying behavior, in general, were made available to project planners and operators. Unfortunately, since most of this information is published primarily in scholarly journals it is not readily accessible to these individuals.

IX. Recommendations and Conclusions

This section offers recommendations and conclusions regarding the major issues dealt with in this report.

A. The Future of CCRPs.

From a theoretical perspective CCRPs have an important role in the criminal justice system since most activities in this system can be traced back to citizen reports. Any project which affects the quantity or quality of input into this system can potentially have major effects on the system as a whole. It is also clear that many communities are investing much effort in CCRP activity. Of greater importance is the fact that citizens are responding to these efforts. Citizens attend meetings, make calls using special telephone numbers, and open their homes to their neighbors. These responses indicate that some needs of the community are being satisfied by CCRPs. Since CCRPs are community oriented, they are likely to effect a number of relevant community issues. Thus, CCRPs may theoretically serve as mechanisms to improve police-community relations, increase community cohesiveness, and reduce unrealistic fears. CCRPs offer one of the few opportunities for citizens to do something positive about the crime situation.

Finally, given the general lack of well designed CCRP evaluation studies, the judgment of project operators and experts in the area of crime prevention take on special importance. The majority of CCRP operators feel that their activities are increasing the number of crimes reported. Many (30%) believe that their projects have increased the quality of these reports. A significant number (20%) also believe that their project has reduced crime in their area. Interviews with crime prevention experts indicated that 19 of these 21 authorities believed that CCRPs are effective in meeting their goals.

Given the above findings and reasoning we recommend that CCRPs continue to receive LEAA support. In particular we are especially optimistic about the potential of Home Presentation and Radio Watch Projects. This support, however, should be contingent upon adequate planning and evaluation. Some important points to consider are presented below and explained in greater detail in Volume III: Model Evaluation Manual¹³.

B. Conceptualization of CCRPs

Regarding our finding of a lack of adequate conceptualization of CCRPs we suggest that project planners and operators give special attention to the following questions:

1. What qualifications should project personnel have?
2. What specific target area will be served by the CCRP?
3. Is there a control area or group available for comparison purposes?
4. What available techniques are best suited to create awareness of and a positive attitude toward the CCRP among target citizens?
5. What available methods are best suited to commit CCRP participants to reporting suspicious/criminal incidents?
6. How will commitment to crime reporting be maintained?
7. What should citizens learn from CCRP educational activities?
8. What positive and negative side-effects may the CCRP create?

For all aspects of CCRP conceptualization it is our recommendation that planners and operators be provided with easily assimilated information concerning relevant behavioral science research findings; or that individuals who have a background in the behavioral sciences be included in the planning and implementing of a CCRP.

C. Evaluation of CCRPs*

It is clear that most CCRPs are collecting information concerning their efforts (e.g., number of presentations). We recommend that they continue to gather these data. In contrast, the continued use of reported crime statistics as the major measure of effectiveness is not recommended.

We strongly recommend that an evaluation plan be developed at the same time a CCRP is being planned. Such a plan should ideally include measures of the following:

1. descriptive information (e.g., age, race, sex) of target area citizens, actual participants, and control area citizens;
2. effort measures (e.g., the number of public service announcements scheduled, the number of group presentations given, the number of educational films shown);
3. short term impact measures (e.g., the number of citizens made aware by public service announcements, the number of membership cards signed, the knowledge gained by participants from educational activities);
4. long-term impact measures (e.g., the number of in-progress calls, the number of calls about suspicious persons/vehicles,

*See Volume III: Model Evaluation¹³ for a comprehensive treatment of evaluating a CCRP.

ratings from dispatchers and investigators regarding the quality of reports); and

5. potential side effects: a) police-community relations (e.g., survey information); b) fear/concern of crime (e.g., survey information); c) overload of police facilities (e.g., response time); and d) community cohesiveness (e.g., survey information).

However, we recognize that most CCRP operators have neither the need nor the resources to implement all of the measures recommended above. Rather operators should decide which project activities are worth evaluating and then select those recommendations which best fit their evaluation needs and resources. Those projects which are operating as demonstration projects with LEAA support however, should conduct comprehensive evaluations of both effort and impact.

D. Crime Reduction

It is our judgment that CCRPs, by themselves, should not be held accountable for demonstrating a reduction in crime. Coupled with other community crime prevention projects (e.g., Operation I.D.), it may be realistic to expect a measurable impact. Yet before an evaluation is attempted, we strongly recommend the use of technical assistance and the use of valid surveys of both victim and witness reporting behavior, due to the complexities of documenting and interpreting a reduction in crime.

E. State of Knowledge in Perspective

The general lack of clearly interpretable knowledge concerning project effectiveness is not limited to CCRPs, crime prevention, or even the entire criminal justice system. Rivlin has noted that the failure to progress in evaluating social services is not so much a failure of the analysts, but is due to a lack of data to analyze. "They must have something to analyze, and neither social service delivery systems nor government programs are organized to generate information about their effectiveness."⁵⁰ We hold that unless action is taken either at the national or state level to improve the planning and evaluating of CCRPs, clear and interpretable information concerning CCRPs' effectiveness will not be forthcoming.

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